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FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7741
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY ASMARA
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KAMPALA
AMEMBASSY KIGALI

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DEPT FOR DS/IP/AF, DS/DSS/ITA, DS/ICI/PII, INR, AF/E, CA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/26/2018
TAS: ASEC, KE, PTER
SUBJECT: NAIROBI CORE EAC CONVENED TO DISCUSS RECENT THREAT REPORTING

REF: TD-314/085165-08

Classified By RSO Jeffrey C. Breed for Reasons 1.4 a,b,c,d,e,f,g

¶1. (S/NF) Summary: Embassy Nairobi's Acting Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM) convened Post's Core Emergency Action Committee (EAC) on 28 November 2008 to discuss recent reporting contained in RefTel regarding a threat to the Lamu Festival taking place in Lamu, Kenya from 28 to 30 December 2008 and its impact, if any, on Post operations, facilities, and/or personnel, as well as on private American Citizens working/residing in Kenya. The EAC agreed that a Warden Message should be sent due to the specific threat to Western interests and Consular will be forwarding language for approval from the Department. The Ambassador will be traveling to this event, as well as a number of Embassy personnel on both personal and official travel, and the Kenyan Security services are monitoring known persons and the area for all suspicious activity. End Summary.

¶2. (SBU) On 28 November 2008, Acting DCM convened a meeting of Embassy Nairobi's Core EAC, to include the Regional Security Office (RSO), Regional Affairs Office (RA), Defense Attach Office (DAO), Somalia Section, Kenya US Liaison Office (KUSLO), FBI Legal Attach (LegAtt), Consular Section (Cons), Management, Public Affairs, Agency for International Development (AID), and Political Office to discuss recent reporting contained in RefTel.

Lamu Festival

¶3. (S/NF) The EAC reviewed the following information contained in RefTel:

-- As of 22 November 2008, unidentified Al-Qa'ida elements were planning suicide attacks on small groups of western visitor to the Lamu cultural festival between 28-30 November 2008. The attacks were being planned in Mombasa at an unknown location. One or more of the individuals returned to Kenya from Ethiopia was assisting the group with designing and building the explosives. The group plans to move to Lamu as the festival date nears in order to link up with another element in Lamu.

-- Kenya Security Services agree that monitoring the activities of Ali Tunza and Salim Awadh Salim is crucial at this point to identify who is involved in the plans. The United States and the European Union have been great sponsors of this festival. Festival organizers have invited envoys from the United States and the European Union as well as other local and international dignitaries who may also be targeted for attacks. Threats by al-Shabaab have been on the rise and the possibility of targeting festivals cannot be ruled out. Investigations by Kenyan Security Services have been launched in Lamu, Malindi and Mombasa to verify the

information.

¶4. (S/NF) GRPO advises that the ultimate Source of this information is a Sub-Source of unknown credibility. However, all entities are aggressively pursuing further details and providing extra security support and personnel in attempts to address this threat information.

¶5. (S/NF) RSO personnel met with Kenya Police Service/Anti-Terrorism Police Unit (KPS/ATPU) counterparts to discuss this threat and ATPU's actions to address. As the Ambassador will be attending this festival with other Ambassadors from Western countries, the KPS, and in particular the ATPU, will be providing additional personnel to monitor the events. RSO offered to support ATPU's efforts by having two of their officers operate from two RSO/Anti-Terrorism Assistance (ATA) boats currently being utilized for training in Manda Bay. These officers will coordinate efforts, information, and action with an Assistant RSO who will accompany the Ambassador on his trip. The Ambassador will travel to Lamu on 29 November 2008 and host an event on a Dhow (boat) for a few dozen people the same day. He will overnight at the Lamu House and return to Nairobi on 30 November 2008.

Kiwayu Gang

¶6. (S/NF) According to an RSO civilian source and ATPU counterparts, Kenyan security forces are currently in pursuit of a group of 18 (6 armed) that came into Kiwayu from Somalia on 23 November 2008. The &gang8 is being pursued through the Boni/Dodoru forest, approximately 50 kilometers Northeast of Lamu. ATPU advises that this area is frequently used by smugglers and poachers and the gang's actions are currently in line with this type of activity. No connection to any threat reporting, to include the Lamu Festival, is being made at this time.

Consular

¶7. (SBU) As the information contained in RefTel is aimed at Western interests, EAC members agreed that a general Warden Message should be approved and sent, reminding Americans of the general threat of terrorist attacks, to include to tourist areas and large festivals. Consular will be submitting language for immediate Department approval and issuance. The Embassy will not be prohibiting personal or official travel of USG employees to Lamu due to this threat information.

Security Posture

¶8. (SBU) Post's security posture remains high, as it continues to be rated Critical for both Terrorism and Crime.

¶9. (SBU) Points of Contact for this matter is RSO Jeffrey C. Breed and DRSO Jeffrey M. Roberts.
Regards.

RANNEBERGER